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3. The method of claim 2 wherein the new scope is introduced without physically introducing a new network, system, or endpoint to the distributed data processing system.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

dynamically reconfiguring the distributed data
processing system by logically moving a scope between
5 management customers.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

dynamically reconfiguring the distributed data
processing system to introduce a new management customer.

10 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the new management
customer is introduced without physically introducing a new
network, system, or endpoint to the distributed data
processing system.

15 7. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

dynamically discovering endpoints, systems, and
networks within the distributed data processing system;

20 correspondingly representing endpoints, systems, and
networks within the distributed data processing system as a
set of endpoint objects, system objects, and network
objects; and

25 logically organizing the endpoint objects, system
objects, and network objects within a set of scopes, wherein
each endpoint object, each system object, and each network
object is uniquely assigned to a scope such that scopes do
not logically overlap.

30 8. The method of claim 7 wherein dynamic discovery is
limited to a scope assigned to a particular management
customer.

9. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

determining whether to allow a reconfiguration operation requested by an administrative user in accordance with security authorization parameters associated with an administrative user.

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10. The method of claim 9 further comprising:

limiting reconfiguration operations requested by an administrative user to scopes assigned to a particular management customer.

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[illegible]

11. An apparatus for management of a distributed data processing system, wherein the distributed data processing system is managed on behalf of a plurality of management customers, the apparatus comprising:

5 means for representing the distributed data processing system as a set of scopes, wherein a scope comprises a logical organization of network-related objects;

means for associating each scope with a management customer, wherein each scope is uniquely assigned to a management customer, wherein each scope is uniquely associated with a set of configuration parameters for managing each scope;

15 means for managing the distributed data processing system as a set of logical networks, wherein a logical network comprises a set of scopes, and wherein each logical network is uniquely assigned to a management customer; and

means for allowing an administrative user to dynamically reconfigure logical networks within the distributed data processing system.

20 12. The apparatus of claim 11 further comprising:

means for dynamically reconfiguring the distributed data processing system to introduce a new scope by logically dividing a pre-existing scope.

25 13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the new scope is introduced without physically introducing a new network, system, or endpoint to the distributed data processing system.

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14. The apparatus of claim 11 further comprising:
means for dynamically reconfiguring the distributed
data processing system by logically moving a scope between
management customers.

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15. The apparatus of claim 11 further comprising:
means for dynamically reconfiguring the distributed
data processing system to introduce a new management
customer.

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16. The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the new management
customer is introduced without physically introducing a new
network, system, or endpoint to the distributed data
processing system.

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17. The apparatus of claim 11 further comprising:
means for dynamically discovering endpoints, systems,
and networks within the distributed data processing system;
means for correspondingly representing endpoints,
systems, and networks within the distributed data processing
system as a set of endpoint objects, system objects, and
network objects; and

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means for logically organizing the endpoint objects,
system objects, and network objects within a set of scopes,
wherein each endpoint object, each system object, and each
network object is uniquely assigned to a scope such that
scopes do not logically overlap.

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18. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein dynamic discovery is
limited to a scope assigned to a particular management
customer.

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19. The apparatus of claim 11 further comprising:

21. A computer program product on a computer readable medium for use in managing a distributed data processing system, wherein the distributed data processing system is managed on behalf of a plurality of management customers, the computer program product comprising:

instructions for representing the distributed data processing system as a set of scopes, wherein a scope comprises a logical organization of network-related objects;

instructions for associating each scope with a management customer, wherein each scope is uniquely assigned to a management customer, wherein each scope is uniquely associated with a set of configuration parameters for managing each scope;

instructions for managing the distributed data processing system as a set of logical networks, wherein a logical network comprises a set of scopes, and wherein each logical network is uniquely assigned to a management customer; and

instructions for allowing an administrative user to dynamically reconfigure logical networks within the distributed data processing system.

22. The computer program product of claim 21 further comprising:

instructions for dynamically reconfiguring the distributed data processing system to introduce a new scope by logically dividing a pre-existing scope.

23. The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the new scope is introduced without physically introducing a new network, system, or endpoint to the distributed data processing system.

24. The computer program product of claim 21 further comprising:

instructions for dynamically reconfiguring the distributed data processing system by logically moving a scope between management customers.

25. The computer program product of claim 21 further comprising:

instructions for dynamically reconfiguring the distributed data processing system to introduce a new management customer.

26. The computer program product of claim 25 wherein the new management customer is introduced without physically introducing a new network, system, or endpoint to the distributed data processing system.

27. The computer program product of claim 21 further comprising:

instructions for dynamically discovering endpoints, systems, and networks within the distributed data processing system;

instructions for correspondingly representing endpoints, systems, and networks within the distributed data processing system as a set of endpoint objects, system objects, and network objects; and

instructions for logically organizing the endpoint objects, system objects, and network objects within a set of scopes, wherein each endpoint object, each system object, and each network object is uniquely assigned to a scope such that scopes do not logically overlap.

28. The computer program product of claim 27 wherein dynamic discovery is limited to a scope assigned to a particular management customer.

5 29. The computer program product of claim 21 further
comprising:

instructions for determining whether to allow a reconfiguration operation requested by an administrative user in accordance with security authorization parameters associated with an administrative user.

30. The computer program product of claim 29 further comprising:

instructions for limiting reconfiguration operations
15 requested by an administrative user to scopes assigned to a
particular management customer.